

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3181.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3181.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT of 2003

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1152) to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1152

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I—UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003".

SEC. 102. RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF POSITION OF UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATOR.

Section 1513 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 553) does not apply to the position or office of Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, who shall continue to be appointed and compensated as provided by section 5(b) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2204(b)).

SEC. 103. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 17(g)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2216(g)) is amended by striking subparagraphs (A) through (K) and inserting the following:

"(A) \$63,000,000 for fiscal year 2005, of which \$2,266,000 shall be used to carry out section 8(f);

"(B) \$64,850,000 for fiscal year 2006, of which \$2,334,000 shall be used to carry out section 8(f);

"(C) \$66,796,000 for fiscal year 2007, of which \$2,404,000 shall be used to carry out section 8(f); and

"(D) \$68,800,000 for fiscal year 2008, of which \$2,476,000 shall be used to carry out section 8(f)."

TITLE II—FIREFIGHTING RESEARCH AND COORDINATION

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Firefighting Research and Coordination Act".

SEC. 202. NEW FIREFIGHTING TECHNOLOGY.

Section 8 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2207) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) ASSISTANCE TO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—At the request of other Federal agencies, including the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, the Administrator may provide assistance in fire prevention and control technologies, including methods of containing insect-infested forest fires and limiting dispersal of resultant fire particle smoke, and methods of measuring and tracking the dispersal of fine particle smoke resulting from fires of insect-infested fuel.

"(f) TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to, or as part of, the program conducted under subsection (a), the Administrator, in consultation with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Inter-Agency Board for Equipment Standardization and Inter-Operability, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the Directorate of Science and Technology of the Department of Homeland Security, national voluntary consensus standards development organizations, interested Federal, State, and local agencies, and other interested parties, shall—

"(A) develop new, and utilize existing, measurement techniques and testing methodologies for evaluating new firefighting technologies, including—

"(i) personal protection equipment;

"(ii) devices for advance warning of extreme hazard;

"(iii) equipment for enhanced vision;

"(iv) devices to locate victims, firefighters, and other rescue personnel in above-ground and below-ground structures;

"(v) equipment and methods to provide information for incident command, including the monitoring and reporting of individual personnel welfare;

"(vi) equipment and methods for training, especially for virtual reality training; and

"(vii) robotics and other remote-controlled devices;

"(B) evaluate the compatibility of new equipment and technology with existing firefighting technology; and

"(C) support the development of new voluntary consensus standards through national voluntary consensus standards organizations for new firefighting technologies based on techniques and methodologies described in subparagraph (A).

"(2) STANDARDS FOR NEW EQUIPMENT.—

(A) The Administrator shall, by regulation, require that new equipment or systems purchased through the assistance program established by the first section 33 meet or exceed applicable voluntary consensus standards for such equipment or systems for which applicable voluntary consensus standards have been established. The Administrator may waive the requirement under this subparagraph with respect to specific standards.

"(B) If an applicant for a grant under the first section 33 proposes to purchase, with assistance provided under the grant, new equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed applicable voluntary consensus standards, the applicant shall include in the application an explanation of why such equipment or systems will serve the needs of the applicant better than equipment or systems that do meet or exceed such standards.

"(C) In making a determination whether or not to waive the requirement under subparagraph (A) with respect to a specific standard, the Administrator shall, to the greatest extent practicable—

"(i) consult with grant applicants and other members of the fire services regarding the impact on fire departments of the requirement to meet or exceed the specific standard;

"(ii) take into consideration the explanation provided by the applicant under subparagraph (B); and

"(iii) seek to minimize the impact of the requirement to meet or exceed the specific standard on the applicant, particularly if meeting the standard would impose additional costs.

"(D) Applicants that apply for a grant under the terms of subparagraph (B) may include a second grant request in the application in the event that the Administrator does not approve the primary grant request on the grounds of the equipment not meeting applicable voluntary consensus standards."

SEC. 203. COORDINATION OF RESPONSE TO NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 10 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2209) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

"(b) MUTUAL AID SYSTEMS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall provide technical assistance and training to State and local fire service officials to establish nationwide and State mutual aid systems for dealing with national emergencies that—

"(A) include threat assessment and equipment deployment strategies;

"(B) include means of collecting asset and resource information to provide accurate and timely data for regional deployment; and

"(C) are consistent with the Federal Response Plan.

"(2) MODEL MUTUAL AID PLANS.—The Administrator shall develop and make available to State and local fire service officials model mutual aid plans for both intrastate and interstate assistance."

(b) REPORT ON STRATEGIC NEEDS.—Within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Science on the need for a strategy concerning deployment of volunteers and emergency response personnel (as defined in section 6 of the Firefighters' Safety Study Act (15 U.S.C. 2232e)), including a national credentialing system, in the event of a national emergency.

(c) REPORT ON FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN.—Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Department of Homeland Security shall transmit a report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, and the House of Representatives Committee on Science describing plans for revisions to the Federal Response Plan and its integration into the National Response Plan, including how the revised plan will address response to terrorist attacks, particularly in urban areas, including fire detection and suppression and related emergency services.

SEC. 204. TRAINING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(d)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking "and" after the semicolon in subparagraph (E);

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (N); and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following:

"(F) strategies for building collapse rescue; "(G) the use of technology in response to fires, including terrorist incidents and other national emergencies;

"(H) response, tactics, and strategies for dealing with terrorist-caused national catastrophes;

"(I) use of and familiarity with the Federal Response Plan;

"(J) leadership and strategic skills, including integrated management systems operations and integrated response;

"(K) applying new technology and developing strategies and tactics for fighting forest fires;

"(L) integrating the activities of terrorism response agencies into national terrorism incident response systems;

"(M) response tactics and strategies for fighting fires at United States ports, including fires on the water and aboard vessels; and".

(b) CONSULTATION ON FIRE ACADEMY CLASSES.—The Superintendent of the National Fire Academy may consult with other Federal, State, and local agency officials in developing curricula for classes offered by the Academy.

(c) COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS TO AVOID DUPLICATION.—The Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall coordinate training provided under section 7(d)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(d)(1)) with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the heads of other Federal agencies—

(1) to ensure that such training does not duplicate existing courses available to fire service personnel; and

(2) to establish a mechanism for eliminating duplicative training programs.

(d) COURSES AND TRAINING ASSISTANCE.—Section 7(l) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(l)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "The Superintendent shall offer, at the Academy and at other sites, courses and training assistance as necessary to accommodate all geographic regions and needs of career and volunteer firefighters."

SEC. 205. FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE GRANTS PROGRAM.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—The first section 33 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b)(2) and inserting the following:

"(2) ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE.—The Director shall establish specific criteria for the selection of recipients of assistance under this section and shall provide grant-writing assistance to applicants."; and

(2) by striking "operate the office established under subsection (b)(2) and" in subsection (e)(2).

(b) MARITIME FIREFIGHTING.—Subsection (b)(3)(B) of the first section 33 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229(b)(3)(B)) is amended by inserting "maritime firefighting," after "arson prevention and detection,".

(c) FIREFIGHTING IN REMOTE AREAS.—The first section 33 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229) is amended—

(1) by inserting "equipment for fighting fires with foam in remote areas without access to water, and" after "including" in subsection (b)(3)(H); and

(2) by inserting "Of the amounts authorized in this paragraph, \$3,000,000 shall be made available each year through fiscal year 2008 for foam firefighting equipment." at the end of subsection (e)(1).

SEC. 206. NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION.

(a) MEMBERS.—Section 151303(b) of title 36, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking "9" in paragraph (2) and inserting "12";

(2) by striking "six" in subparagraph (D) of paragraph (2) and inserting "nine"; and

(3) by striking "3 members" in paragraph (3) and inserting "4 members".

(b) COMPENSATION.—Section 151304(b)(3) of title 36, United States Code, is amended by inserting "15 percent above" after "more than".

(c) PERIOD OF AUTHORIZED ASSISTANCE.—Section 151307 of title 36, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a)(1), by striking "During the 10-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Fire Administration Authorization Act of 2000, the" and inserting "The".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 1152, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the U.S. Fire Administration Reauthorization Act, which began life in the House as H.R. 2692, introduced by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH), subcommittee chairman. Most Americans have never heard of the U.S. Fire Administration, but it has enhanced the protection of all of our communities, our neighborhoods; and firefighters know the agency well.

The funds we are authorizing in this bill will continue to train our local firefighters both at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg and in State and local training centers. These funds will also help promote residential fire sprinklers, fire prevention activities, and other activities that save lives. The U.S. Fire Administration has also administered the FIRE program, which helps our local fire departments purchase desperately needed fire equipment. It is one of the most successful Federal assistance programs devised by this Congress or any previous Congress.

One of the great things about this program is that the politicians, and I have fondness for politicians, but the politicians are sort of taking a back seat. It is the people involved, the firefighters themselves in every day protecting our homes and our neighborhoods and communities that established the criteria for this massive grant program and do the actual evaluating. It is a program with unquestioned integrity. I say that because I have watched it in operation, and all of our congressional districts across the country are taking advantage of it, not

for selfish reasons but to protect our people in their homes, in their neighborhoods, in their communities, where they live.

I will tell my colleagues a personal experience in my own congressional district. Utica, New York, had an arson rate three times the national average. It was a serious problem in New York. I sat down with the previous administrator of FEMA and said, let's work with this community because this is a serious problem and it has to be addressed and it is far beyond the ability of the individual community to come to grips with it in any meaningful way without some added guidance and inspiration and, quite frankly, some financial support from beyond our borders. FEMA did it. We did it. Collectively, Utica has enjoyed its best day in the last couple of years. The arson rate is down dramatically. People feel more comfortable and safer in their homes. It is all because of some work that came out of the U.S. Fire Administration.

I would say for a whole lot of the right reasons, I urge approval of this bill which will help our localities in very tangible ways, meaningful ways that touch the lives of individual families. We owe it to our firefighters both paid and volunteer. Incidentally, let me just stress, paid and volunteer. I have heard some people suggest on occasion that we have professional firefighters and we have volunteer firefighters. There is no such differential. We have paid and unpaid but those volunteers from coast to coast are some of the most dedicated, professional, able, committed people we will find anywhere. Thank God for the volunteer firefighters of America. That is not to indicate I do not appreciate what the paid firefighters do day in and day out or making a professional career of it, but those volunteers in communities all across this land do outstanding work, give of their time and their talent and their energy to protect us and our communities. I want to salute them, and I want to dedicate passage of this bill to them.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of S. 1152, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act. I want to thank all the Members who had a part, including the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT). The gentleman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is on her way. I know she has worked on this very diligently.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to add something here. There was some confusion about section 204(c) of this bill regarding coordination of firefighting training activities.

I want to clarify that the reference to "other Federal agencies" in this section includes the Office of Domestic Preparedness and does not conflict with the counterterrorism training provisions in the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

I also would like to place in the RECORD at this juncture an exchange of letters between me as chairman of the Committee on Science and Chairman YOUNG of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I also serve on that committee, too, so in some respects I am writing to myself. This is an exchange of letters that further clarifies it.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, November 21, 2003.

Hon. SHERWOOD, L. BOEHLERT,
Chairman, Committee on Science,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in matters contained in S. 1152, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003.

Our Committee recognizes the importance of S. 1152 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over certain provisions of the bill, I agree not to request a referral and allow the bill to be considered in the House under suspension of the rules. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding my decision to forego a sequential referral waives, reduces or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and that a copy of this letter and of your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest will be included as part of the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill by the House.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
Washington, DC, November 21, 2003.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Chairman Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee over matters contained in S. 1152, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003.

I appreciate your not requesting a referral of this bill and allowing it to be considered by the House under suspension of the rules. Specifically, I acknowledge that your Committee has a valid claim to jurisdiction over certain provisions of the bill as drafted. I agree that by forgoing a sequential referral you do not waive, reduce, or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

I also agree that a copy of this letter and of your letter will be included as part of the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill by the House.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT,
Chairman.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) on this specific legislation. I know that she has been working on this diligently. We recognize that there are a great number of deaths as a result of fire. We need to continue to work in this area. We know we have had natural disasters also in this area. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Members that have played a role.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and ask unanimous consent that she be permitted to control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, let me apologize for being late. I was told to be here by 12, and I was in a briefing, so I came running.

Let me thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Research of the Committee on Science, the staff and the other leadership of the committee for working on this bill. I rise in support of Senate bill 1152, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003.

This legislation is closely related to H.R. 2692, which I joined Research Subcommittee Chairman SMITH in introducing and which was ordered reported by the Committee on Science on July 22. I would like to thank Chairman SMITH for working with me in a collegial way in the development of the fire authorization bill. The version of the authorization bill before the House preserves the key features of H.R. 2692.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, which created the U.S. Fire Administration, was intended to address a serious problem affecting the safety of all Americans. Much progress has been made as a result of this legislation to advance public education about fire safety, to improve the effectiveness of the fire services throughout the Nation, and to foster the wider use of home fire safety devices.

Nevertheless, the United States still has one of the highest fire death rates among advanced nations, and fire deaths exceed the loss of life from all natural disasters combined. Clearly, much work remains to be done in order to make needed improvements in the Nation's fire safety record. I believe that S. 1152 will ensure that the U.S. Fire Administration has the resources and policies in place to help achieve this goal.

□ 1145

One matter of concern is that the effectiveness of the U.S. fire administra-

tion could suffer due to its submersion in the new Department of Homeland Security, which understandably must concentrate its efforts on combating threats from terrorism. The legislation seeks to preserve the status and visibility of the fire administration and its vital programs to advance fire safety within the Department of Homeland Security.

To achieve this result, the bill reestablishes the position of fire administrator as a Presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed post. This is appropriate given the role of the Fire Administrator as the lead advocate for fire services within the Federal Government.

Another important function of the U.S. Fire Administration is to support research and development and testing of new firefighting technologies. This bill reemphasizes this role and authorizes new funding to help carry it out, including support for the process for developing consensus standards for the performance of new fire protection and control technologies.

Consistent with supporting the development of appropriate voluntary consensus standards for new firefighting equipment, the bill requires that equipment provided under the fire grants program conform to such standards where they exist. Fire grants provide fire departments across the Nation with the equipment and training they need to meet their important responsibilities in protecting the public from fire hazards. The Fire Administrator is given flexibility in applying the standards requirement for these grants so that the fire departments may propose solutions that make the most sense for their particular circumstances. Provision for this flexibility in the bill is in accordance with the recommendations received during the Committee on Science hearing on the legislation. The bill makes an additional modification to the statute creating the Fire Grants Program by specifying that awards to support training may include training firefighting personnel and maritime firefighting. The need for such training was ably advocated by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU), championed this provision.

Madam Speaker, this bill is a bipartisan piece of legislation that authorizes the activities of a small, but extremely valuable, Federal agency that contributes to the safety of all Americans. I am pleased to commend the measure to my colleagues and ask for their support in the passage of this bill in the House.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Research Subcommittee and a real friend of the firefighters.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for being one of the original congressional

leaders for first responders and firefighters. And to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), who is the vice chairman or ranking member of our Research Subcommittee, I thank her for her help.

We have come a long way in this Congress helping first responders, and I think it has struck all of us after 9/11, the tremendous contribution that first responders add to the security of this country. So we are now asking even more of our firefighters and medical personnel. I would like to also commend Administrator Paulison, who has done an excellent job in terms of increasing the productivity and the efficiency of the United States Fire Administration.

This legislation is consistent with the President's request of a 3 percent increase in funding for the U.S. Fire Administration, but still at the same time with the help of the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) on that side, certainly the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and the chairman of this committee and myself and many others on the Republican side of the aisle, we worked together to make sure that we try to give firefighters the kind of training and support that they need to more effectively and efficiently conduct their business.

I would also like to commend the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) for initiating the standards requirement that allows different fire departments to know the quality of some of the equipment and the machinery and the items that they might buy in that fire department to make sure that they do not, for lack of a better expression, get ripped off with equipment that is not as good as it seems.

Let me conclude by saying this is the bill I introduced and we passed in the House. It is a good bill. This Congress and America have increased our understanding that first responders and firefighters are very important to this country. Eighty percent of our firefighters in the United States are volunteers, but the full-time firefighter represents 80 percent of the people. So we have got to continue to support both the full-time firefighters and the volunteers, and that is what this bill does.

Madam Speaker, the legislation before us today would reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, which is charged with helping to prevent and control fire-related losses through leadership, advocacy, education, and support. This bill has been endorsed by a number of leading fire organizations including the Congressional Fire Services Institute, International Association of Fire Fighters, National Fire Protection Association, and National Volunteer Fire Council.

S. 1152, which is companion legislation to a bill that the distinguished Ranking Member of the Research Subcommittee and I introduced earlier this year, adheres to the Administration's budget request and provides 3 percent increases each year from 2005–2008. It would also restore the position of U.S. Fire Adminis-

trator as a Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed position, after it was inadvertently eliminated by the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

USFA coordinates federal fire service training, public education, research, and data collection and analysis activities. In addition, USFA has administered the fire grant program, which supports fire departments by providing them with the tools and resources necessary to protect the health and safety of the public and firefighting personnel. USFA Administrator David Paulison has done an excellent job since being appointed in 2001, and I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly recognize his outstanding service.

This legislation also directs USFA to develop standards for firefighting equipment and technology. The new standards will help to ensure that firefighters have access to the highest quality equipment available. Equipment purchased through the fire grant program must meet the new standards, although under unique circumstances, the Administrator is given flexibility to waive this requirement.

There was an effort to attach language similar to Representative BOB ETHERIDGE's bill H.R. 919, the Hometown Heroes Survivor Benefit Act, to the bill before us today. I am one of 281 cosponsors of H.R. 919, which would ensure that the family of a public safety officer who suffers a fatal heart attack or stroke in the line of duty receives survivor benefits. These families are often forced to wrangle with the Justice Department to obtain compensation. In the interest of passing the USFA reauthorization expeditiously the language was eventually dropped. However, I would like to express my commitment to continuing to work for passage of H.R. 919.

In closing, I am pleased that we were able to work closely with members of the minority as well as members of the fire services community in drafting this bipartisan legislation. I urge every Member to support S. 1152 so that we can insure the long-term viability of this important program.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act. And I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) not only for bringing this important legislation to the floor, but for their exemplary leadership they have displayed on behalf of the fire community over these many years.

Providing firefighters with the training and equipment they need to protect our communities is about as important a job as the Congress is charged with. This Congress and the previous Congress have risen to the occasion. And I am heartened by the advancement of this goal in recent years. So to the Chair and ranking members, they have done a spectacular job.

We started with the passage of the FIRE Act in 2000, to provide Federal grants directly to local fire departments to help address equipment and training and other firefighter-related needs. Since then communities have

received close to 13,000 awards nationwide. There are 32,000 fire departments. Figure out the math. This has been an amazing achievement.

Two weeks ago we were able to pass the "Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response," the SAFER program. That authorizes \$7.6 billion through 2010 to combat the dangerous crisis of inadequate staffing in our Nation's career fire departments and volunteer departments at a time when it is more crucial than ever. We have come a long way. We have come a long way, indeed.

America's fire death rate is still one of the highest per capita in the industrial world. Fire kills 3,700 people per year, injures 20,000, and approximately 100 firefighters die annually while doing their work.

The USFA's National Fire Academy offers educational opportunities for firefighters in fire prevention and life safety activities, and, of course, we want it also to deal with the terrorist threat that is at hand. As a member of the Select Committee on Homeland Security, I find nothing to be more important than the defense of our families and our streets.

Through research, testing, and evaluation, USFA works with the public and private entities to promote and improve fire and life safety. Additionally, the data collection of the National Fire Safety Data Center is absolutely critical to identify problem areas for which prevention and mitigation strategies are needed. Firefighters, whose bravery and valor protect our Nation every day, deserve all that we can give them, and a strong, flourishing Fire Administration will assist in this regard.

And again, in conclusion, Madam Speaker, I think this is a great day for the fire services throughout the United States and a great day for our firefighters. They have earned it, and we are glad to participate in getting this legislation through today.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1152, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act. This bill appropriately recognizes the value of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) for its national leadership in reducing the threat of fires and educating Americans about fire prevention methods. I want to thank Research Subcommittee Chairman NICK SMITH and Science Chairman BOEHLERT for their leadership on this issue and their support for the inclusion of a bill I introduced, H.R. 545, the Firefighting Research and Coordination Act. I appreciate Senator MCCAIN's leadership on this bill and for his hard work getting it passed last night in the Senate.

The Firefighting Research and Coordination Act helps address current policy questions on how the federal government can most effectively provide firefighters with the training and equipment necessary to protect lives. The bill gives appropriate weight to top fire service needs: the development of voluntary consensus standards for firefighting equipment and technology; establishing nationwide and

State mutual aid systems for dealing with national emergencies; and authorizing the National Fire Academy to train firefighters to respond to acts of terrorism and other national emergencies.

This legislation enjoys wide bipartisan support and the endorsement of many national fire groups including the Congressional Fire Services Institute, National Fire Protection Association, and the International Association of Firefighters and Fire Chiefs, among others. With the tools this bill provides, I am confident the USFA will continue to be recognized as the preeminent authority in fire education and fire prevention. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support S. 1152, bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the important work done by U.S. Fire Administration R. David Paulson and his dedicated staff in Emmitsburg, MD and Washington, DC.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 established the United States Fire Administration and its National Fire Academy to reduce life and economic losses due to fire and related emergencies, through leadership, advocacy, coordination and support.

Since that time, through data collection, public education, research and training efforts, USFA has helped reduce fire deaths by at least half—making our communities and our citizens safer. For the past three years, the Fire Administrator has been tasked with administering the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, created by Congress to adequately train and equip our career and volunteer firefighters across the country.

This \$750 million program is vital to our firefighters, too many of whom risk their lives on a daily basis to protect our homes and our families without the modern equipment and advanced training they deserve. The Fire Grant program has succeeded at getting much-needed dollars to fire departments in fair, efficient manner, and USFA has been widely praised for its work in administering the program.

Authority for the Fire Grant program has now been moved to the Department of Homeland Security, and Members of the Fire Caucus, and all supporters of the fire community, will closely monitor the administration of the Grant program to guarantee that it continues to meet the needs of our fire departments.

Madam Speaker, this legislation also contains provisions important to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundations, which was established more than a decade ago through the leadership of Senator PAUL SARBANES to create an organization that would properly honor all of America's fallen fire heroes—and take care of the surviving families and loved ones as they cope with their grief and attempt to move on after their loss.

The Foundation carries out this mission with great compassion and dedication, and they have achieved a tremendous record of assisting the families of our fallen firefighters through the many programs, projects and activities they promote throughout the year. The provisions included in this legislation will allow the Foundation to continue, and to improve upon, the important work we have charged them to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this legislation, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1152.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING TERRORIST ATTACKS IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, ON NOVEMBER 15, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 453) condemning the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15, 2003, expressing condolences to the families of the individuals murdered and expressing sympathies to the individuals injured in the terrorist attacks, and standing in solidarity with Turkey in the fight against terrorism, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

Whereas in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15, 2003, two explosions, set off minutes apart during Sabbath morning services, devastated Neve Shalom, the city's largest synagogue, and the Beth Israel Synagogue, about three miles away;

Whereas more than 20 people, both Muslims and Jews, were killed, and more than 300 people, both Muslims and Jews, were wounded, in the bombing attacks on the synagogues;

Whereas on November 20, 2003, two bombs exploded at the Consulate of the United Kingdom in Istanbul and at the HSBC Bank;

Whereas among the more than 25 killed and 450 wounded in the November 20 bombing attacks on the consulate general and commercial buildings were Muslims and Christians—Turks, British diplomats, and visitors to the Turkish Republic;

Whereas the United Kingdom is an ally of the United States and Turkey in the global war on terrorism;

Whereas the acts of murder committed on November 15 and 20, 2003, in Istanbul, Turkey, were cowardly and brutal manifestations of international terrorism;

Whereas the Government of Turkey immediately condemned the terrorist attacks in the strongest possible terms and has vowed to bring the perpetrators to just at all costs;

Whereas the United States, the United Kingdom, and Turkey equally abhor and denounce these hateful, repugnant, and loathsome acts of terrorism;

Whereas with anti-Semitic activities escalating the safety and security of Jewish people throughout the world is a matter of serious concern;

Whereas since Turkey cherishes its traditions of hospitality and religious tolerance and in particular its history of more than five hundred years of good Jewish-Muslim relations, the attacks on synagogues and consular premises came as a special shock to the Turkish people and to their friends throughout the world;

Whereas the United States and Turkey are allied by shared values and a common interest in building a stable, peaceful, and prosperous world;

Whereas Turkey, a predominantly Muslim nation with a secular government, has close relations with Israel and is also the only predominantly Muslim member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and

Whereas as the acts of murder committed on November 15 and 20, 2003 show again that terrorism respects neither boundaries nor borders:

Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives

(1) condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15 and 20, 2003;

(2) expresses its condolences to the families of the individuals murdered in the terrorist attacks, expresses its sympathies to the individuals injured in the attacks, and conveys its hope for the rapid and complete recovery of all such injured individuals;

(3) expresses its condolences to the people and government of the Turkish Republic and of the United Kingdom over the losses they have suffered; and

(4) expresses its solidarity with the United Kingdom, the Turkish republic, and all other countries which stand united against terrorism and which work together to bring to justice the perpetrators of these and other terrorist attacks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the resolution before us condemns the terrorist attacks in Istanbul last Saturday as well as yesterday morning. I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my friend, for proffering this resolution and for the prompt consideration that is being given to it by our leadership in scheduling it very quickly before the body today.

This resolution conveys our deepest and heartfelt sympathy to the victims and their families and states that the United States stands in solidarity with the Turkish people in the fight against terrorism. These attacks, Madam Speaker, bear all the hallmarks of al Qaeda, and that terrorist group has claimed responsibility for these cruel and cowardly acts.

This demonstrates, once again, that the target of global terrorists is not just the United States of America, but all those who reject their hateful vision of a clash of civilizations and governments by religious extremism.